



REGENCY DANCE

Paul Ransohoff
(graphite, walnut ink and ink wash on paper, 11x15)

In this piece, set in Regency-era England, I was exploring the graphic technique of Giambattista Tiepolo (1696–1770), whose fresh and lively ink drawings attained a height of graphic fluency and energy. I began with a quick, light and loose graphite search for an approximate location of figures and background. I continued with a few brief pen strokes to describe some key features. Then, I applied two layers of ink wash, first dark then light, to create figures and formal mass. Steps two and three may be done in reverse order if the situation seems to call for it. These three steps, each with the distinct quality of spontaneous search and decision, when carried out with a light hand and a ready mind to avoid overworking, collaborate to bring a scene to life.

DRUNKEN SILENUS, AFTER RUBENS

Paul Ransohoff
(graphite, walnut ink and ink wash on paper, 14x17)

Silenus was a demigod in Greek mythology, the tutor of Dionysus, the god of wine and fertility. Afflicted with the curse of immortality, Silenus was also a poetic muse, as he could be made to burst into original and prophetic song when intoxicated. He famously—and reluctantly—granted Midas his wish for the golden touch. It remains a mystery why the diplomat and court painter Rubens, famed for his sobriety and propriety, felt a fondness for Silenus, whom he painted several times over his career. This drawing is based on the painting in the Alte Pinakothek museum in Munich, which Rubens kept in his personal possession throughout his life.

